

## MOVIE REVIEW – MY SUMMER MOVIE PICKS By Lorraine Viade, Psy.D.



### *Man of Steel*

Where has this Superman been all these years? The story was good and a bit darker than the other versions. If for no other reason, go see Kevin Costner deliver a great performance. Keep an open mind and embrace the spirit of this more human and vulnerable portrayal of the alien from Krypton. They changed things up a bit. So, purists, be warned. But just like Star Trek, different can be good – very good. Henry Cavill does full justice to the cape and the suit. Bring me more!

### *Monsters U*

This movie was sweet, funny and entertaining for all ages. Cute storyline and familiar voices add up to another winner for animation. I took my 11-year-old granddaughter and she enjoyed it. Although she was annoyed that I insisted on staying until the end of all the credits (I always do) which I recommend that you do in this case in order to see the final little scene. It is worth the wait.

### *This is The End*

I don't really have the words to properly review this one. You just have to see it to believe it. A cast of familiar comedy movie faces playing themselves in a parody, on top of a farce, on top of a spoof, on top of a disaster that all leads up to a riot of a good time. You have to be pretty sick and twisted in your taste for comedy to appreciate this one. I liked it! The easily offended need not attend.

This year, I took a “stay”-cation. I was lucky enough to take off three weeks. Don't hate. Appreciate the advice I have to offer. You might have a good time and save a little money in the process. Here my hits and misses for those of you who may be too busy to research the local places. First stop, Disneyland. OMG what it costs just to get in! My advice is try to win some passes on the radio or see if you know anyone who can get you an employee or other type of pass. Otherwise, there are small loans available. Take your own food if you do decide to go unless you don't like to carry things, then just bite the bullet and pay the outrageous prices. And you might as well go to California Adventure, too. The new rides and Cars Land are really good. There are lots of interesting things to see and eat there.

How about a little tour of what used to be Grauman's Chinese Theater? Worth the price of admission for the history and facts on a Hollywood landmark that will always be Grauman's to me. TCL Chinese Theater just doesn't sound like Hollywood to me. Next stop: The LA Zoo. The new reptile lair was not as impressive as I hoped, but they did have some great specimens if you are into it. You can feed nectar to pretty birds for \$3.00 if you don't have a phobia like I do.

Damn you, Alfred Hitchcock! Take the shuttle and get on and off all day. It is worth the extra fee when you are tired and what you want to see is on the other side of the park. Take food if you can. Peanut butter and jelly travels well. Drinks are insane. Bring your own water no matter where you go. If you don't enjoy seeing animals in captivity then the San Diego Wild Animal Park may be a better option. But the giraffes at the LA Zoo are beautiful.

Moving on to The Aquarium of the Pacific which has lots of lovely fish and marine life but it is not ever going to compete with the likes of Sea World. Good to relax though and for petting small sharks, sting rays and such. No dolphin or manatee. If you want a great aquarium experience, Monterey has a beautiful one. I really enjoyed the newer and improved Museum of Natural History. The butterfly encounter was very nice but small and you are limited to only 30 minutes inside – and you have to schedule the time in advance. There is a separate fee of \$3.00 per person to enter. The dinosaurs are the big and very impressive reason to go. Even the diorama looked brighter. Not too expensive and good for a date on a Saturday or Sunday. Laguna Beach has lovely coves and tide pools to discover and well worth the drive if sun and surf are your thing. Just don't forget the sunscreen!

A summer concert should not be avoided. Robert Plant was amazing! If you don't know who that is, listen to some vintage Led Zeppelin. Loved it, loved it, loved it! His voice was fantastic. The Shrine Auditorium, not so much. There is nothing in the way of food or snacks so be sure to eat before you go there and don't expect much from the sound. There are much better venues for concerts. The Nokia is one of my favorites and the Greek can't be beat for evening excitement. A few visits with family to round out the time off and, of course, a scattering of movies.

My advice, look for discount tickets online (I found some for the aquarium), check your auto club for discounts as well as the discount and coupon-driven websites. Remember that certain large member stores have discount movie tickets that come in handy as does the union. Some theaters are charging a location fee now which cuts into the discount, so beware. If you have time and don't mind standing in line and waiting, there are movie preview sites but some films are restricted by age. I had lots of fun, but I didn't see as many movies as I wanted to. I did do a lot of binge viewing and series watching.

So there you have my brief synopsis of my summer time off. It's nice to be back! I can't wait to get back to the theaters!